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The Urban District Council of Caterham

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**REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.**

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THE PRIORY,  
CATERHAM VALLEY,  
February, 1914.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council  
of Caterham.*

GENTLEMEN,

As Medical Officer of Health I have the honour to present you with my Annual Report for the year 1913 for the District over which you preside:—

**Area, Statistics and Population.**

The area comprises 2,438 acres, with a population of:—

|                      |     |        |
|----------------------|-----|--------|
| Caterham (estimated) | ... | 7,981  |
| Asylum (actual)      | ..  | 2,014  |
| Barracks (actual)    | ... | 1,150  |
| <hr/>                |     |        |
| Total                |     | 11,145 |

During the year there has been 195 births and 87 deaths giving respectively a birth rate of 21·9 and a death rate of 9·5 per 1,000 of the population. In estimating these rates the population of the Asylum and the deaths therein have been excluded.

There have been 10 deaths of infants, i.e., children under 1 year of age. 8 of these have been due to Premature Birth, 1 to Tuberculous Meningitis and 1 to improper feeding and neglect. It is interesting and instructive to note that in the case of infantile death from Tubercular Meningitis that the father of the child was suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis and was probably the source of the infection. The parents of the latter infantile death were prosecuted and convicted for neglect of their children. No death from infantile diarrhoea was recorded during the year, and

on the whole the District was little affected by this dread infantile trouble, much praise, in this respect is due to your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Martin, for his indefatigable energy in the inspection of houses and premises, and not allowing the accumulation of refuse or manure, it being now generally recognised that much of the incidence of this disease is due to the presence of flies and infested dust.

### **Infectious Diseases.**

Sixty nine cases of infectious disease were notified during the year, viz : 9 of Diphtheria, 32 of Scarlet Fever, 4 of Enteric Fever, 1 of Puerperal Fever, 17 of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and 6 of other forms of Tubercular diseases.

Of the above, 5 cases of Scarlet Fever, 1 of Diphtheria and 3 of Enteric were notified from the Metropolitan Asylum, and the other case of Enteric was one of the Asylum employees. In connection with the Enteric Fever cases it was found that the Asylum water drawn from a deep well in their own grounds contained considerable numbers of Colon Baccilli, indicative of Sewage pollution. Much energy and investigation by the Asylum Board led them to the decision that it would be wiser on their part to give up the treatment of their Sewage by irrigation on their own land as hitherto has been done, and so remove the possible source of their water contamination. With this in view they applied to the Council to take their Sewage and an amicable arrangement having been come to, the necessary works were carried out and the whole of the Asylum Sewage is now treated at the Council Sewage Works.

Of the 27 cases of Scarlet Fever notified from Caterham 15 were removed to the Isolation Hospital. 2 deaths were recorded from this disease during the year. 8 cases of Diphtheria were notified, 6 of which were removed to the Isolation Hospital, 1 death unfortunately occurred. 17 cases of Pulmonary Phthisis were notified during the year, 5 of which were removed to Sanatoria for treatment. Nine deaths from Pulmonary Phthisis were registered during the year.

Much good would accrue if arrangements could be hastened for the provision of suitable homes for cases of hopeless Consumption as it is practically impossible in the smaller houses, both for want of room and the ignorance as to the infectivity of the disease, to arrange either suitable isolation or put into practice the necessary hygienic measures for dealing with this disease.

All the cases of Tuberculosis notified have been circularised and where necessary, disinfection and re disinfection has been carried out.

The single case of Puerperal Fever notified happily terminated in recovery.

**General Hygenic Proceedings.**

The additional works to receive the Sewage from the Asylum have now been completed and the whole of the works are in a satisfactory condition. The number of gallons treated during the past year has been 42,700,000. The works have been inspected by engineers from foreign countries and are said to be the most complete and up-to-date in the South of England. A pure effluent is obtained and the sewers, bacteria beds and works generally, are in good order.

The number of cesspools emptied during the year, in the portion of the district not sewered, has been 870. The contents after being deodorised are removed to the sewage farm in covered vans. The question of main drainage of the Valley is now under the consideration of the Sanitary Committee.

**Housing of the Working Classes.**

The number of houses in the District under £16 rateable value is 954 and over £16 and under £26 is 269 ; so that there is an adequate supply of cottages for the working classes in the District.

Systematic inspection has been made of the Cottages. Three cases of over-crowding were dealt with.

The following defects were remedied during the year :—

|                                     |         |     |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-----|
| Drainage Defects and Stoppages      | ...     | 200 |
| Defective W.Cs.                     | ... ..  | 15  |
| Defective Dust Bins                 | ... ..  | 35  |
| Animals, Manure and Offal Nuisances |         | 6   |
| Defective Walls and Roofs           | ...     | 23  |
| Sundry Defects                      | .... .. | 15  |

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Total 294

### **House Refuse.**

The Council have removed 3158 loads of House Refuse during the year. This is either burnt at the local Brickworks or on sites at a distance from inhabited houses.

### **New Buildings.**

Plans of 15 new houses or additions to existing houses have been passed by the Council.

### **Water Supply.**

Periodical analyses were made by Dr. S. RIDEAL, F.I.C. on behalf of the Council of the water supplied from the mains of the East Surrey Water Co. Dr. RIDEAL reports that the water shows a high degree of purification.

### **Slaughter Houses.**

Frequent inspection of the four slaughterhouses in the district has been made but no case of tuberculous meat has been detected. The slaughter houses are kept in a clean and satisfactory condition. The humane killer is now used for most of the slaughtering.

### **Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.**

Fourteen analyses of Milk have been made during the year but no case of adulteration has been detected. There are 7 Cowkeepers and 12 Dairymen. The Dairies and Cowsheds have been repeatedly visited and found to be in order.

### **Sale of Foods and Drugs Act.**

The number of samples analysed during the year has been 31. Two samples were found to be adulterated or to have deteriorated, and the sellers of these were prosecuted and convicted.

### **Factory and Workshops Act.**

There are 7 Bakehouses, 6 Laundries, and 25 workshops and workplaces in the district. These are in proper sanitary condition and well suited for their respective trades

**S. DAVEY,**

*Medical Officer of Health for the Urban District of Caterham.*